

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

EB-07 FRB-03 H-02 INR-07 INT-05 L-03 LAB-04 NSAE-00

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 433

INFO ALL EC CAPITALS 1620

AMEMBASSY LISBON

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: EEC PO EAID

SUBJECT: US/EC CONSULTATIONS ON AID TO PORTUGAL

REF: LISBON 639 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: US AND EC OFFICIALS MET ON JANUARY 30 TO COMPARE NOTES ON THEIR INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS TO ASSIST THE PORTUGUESE ECONOMY. THEIR GENERAL ASSESSMENT OF THE SITUATION IN PORTUGAL COINCIDED AND IT WAS AGREED THAT THE US AND EC PROGRAMS WERE LARGELY COMPLEMENTARY. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING THE FIRST MEETING OF THE JOINT PORTUGUESE-UNITED STATES ECONOMIC COMMISSION IN LISBON (REFTEL) THE US TEAM, CONSISTING OF NOOTER AND TAUBENBLATT OF AID, RYAN OF EB/OMA, STATE, AND PATTERSON, AIR REPRESENTATIVE AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY LISBON, MET WITH EC COMMISSION AND EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK OFFICIALS WORKING ON AID TO PORTUGAL. THE EC TEAM WAS HEADED BY DE KERGORLAY, DEPUT DIRECTOR

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GENERAL FOR EXTERNAL RELATIONS, ACCOMPANIED BY CAPORALE AND BEINH-

ARDT, EXTERNAL RELATIONS; BONFATTI, INDUSTRY AND TECHNOLOGY;
DI CARPEGNA, AGRICULTURE, AND LANERS OF THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT
BANK. JOHNSON AND NEWLIN OF THE USMISSION ALSO ATTENDED.

3. DE KERGORLAY LED OFF WITH AN OVERVIEW OF THE GENERAL POLITICAL
FRAMEWORK. HE SAID THE ONLY INTERNAL RESTRICTION THAT THE
COMMUNITY HAD PUT ON ITS AID WAS THAT THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT
MOVE IN THE DIRECTION OF SOME FORM OF DEMOCRATIC REGIME.
THE COMMUNITY HAS BEEN ENCOURAGING THE PORTUGUESE BY DEMONSTRATING
THAT THE FURTHER THE PORTUGUESE MOVE TOWARD DEMOCRACY THE MORE
FORTHCOMING THE COMMUNITY IS WITH ITS ASSISTANCE. FOR EXAMPLE,
WHEN THE VASCO GONCALVES LINE WAS IN THE ASCENDENCY LAST YEAR
THE COUNCIL REFRAINED FROM APPROVING THE EC'S EMERGENCY AID
PACKAGE. BUT IN JULY, WHEN THINGS WERE LOOKING BETTER IN
PORTUGAL, THE COUNCIL NOT ONLY AUTHORIZED THE PACKAGE BUT BROKE
NEW GROUND BY PUTTING ALL THE EMERGENCY AID UNDER THE COMMUNITY'S
WING. THE MAJOR ADVANTAGE OF THIS TO THE PORTUGUESE, ACCORDING
TO DE KERGORLAY, WAS THAT IF THE EMERGENCY AID PACKAGE HAS BEEN
FUNDED BY MEMBER GOVERNMENTS IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN 1-1/2 TO 2 YEARS
TO GET APPROVAL FROM ALL NATIONAL PARLIAMENTS. DONE ON A
COMMUNITY BASIS, ONCE THE COUNCIL AND THE COMMISSION WERE ON
BOARD, ALL THAT WAS REQUIRED WAS APPROVAL BY THE EUROPEAN
PARLIAMENT WHICH TAKES ABOUT THREE WEEKS.

4. LOOKING AHEAD, DE KERGORLAY SAID THAT FROM BRUSSELS IT
LOOKED AS IF THE APRIL 25 ELECTIONS WOULD TAKE PLACE ON
SCHEDULE.
IF HE HAD TO BET, HE WOULD BET ON A MAJOR SWITCH FROM THE LEFT
TO THE CENTER AND RIGHT, WITH THE COMMUNISTS AND EVERYTHING TO
THEIR LEFT POLLING ABOUT TEN PERCENT OF THE VOTE. THE CENTER--
THE PPD AND THE SOCIALISTS--WOULD RUN MORE OR LESS NECK AND
NECK. HE WOULD GIVE THE PPD A SLIGHT EDGE BUT EACH WOULD PROBABLY
GET ABOUT ONE-THIRD. MOREOVER, HE NOTED, BOTH PARTIES WERE
THEMSELVES MOVING SOMEWHAT TO THE RIGHT. HE CHARACTERIZED THE
PORTUGUES SOCIALISTS AS BEING CLOSER TO THE GERMAN MODEL THAN
THE FRENCH. THE RIGHT--CDS--WHICH ONLY GOT SEVEN PERCENT
IN THE LAST ELECTIONS WOULD PROBABLY PICK UP FROM 20-25 PERCENT
IN APRIL. DE KERGORLEY BELIEVES THE ONLY ISSUE WHICH MIGHT PUT
THE APRIL ELECTIONS IN DOUBT IS THE OUTCOME OF THE NEGOTIATIONS
BETWEEN THE MILITARY AND THE PARTIES. HE BELIEVES THAT IF THE
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MILITARY HOLD OUT FOR TOO MUCH OF A WATCHDOG ROLE THE PARTIES
MIGHT NOT SIGN THE PACT. IF THIS HAPPNED, ONE COULD NOT
ENTIRELY RULE OUT AN ARMY UPHEAVAL. ON BALANCE, HOWEVER,
HE WAS OPTIMISTIC THAT THE PORTUGUESE, WHO HAD RECENTLY DEMON-
STRATED CONSIDERABLE CAPACITY FOR COMPROMISE, WOULD FIND ONE IN
THIS CASE.

5. ECONOMIC ISSUES: LOOKING TO THE POST ELECTION PERIOD,

DE KERGORLAY BELIEVES THAT ECONOMIC ISSUES WILL OUTWEIGH POLITICAL ONES. HE NOTED THAT FORT PERCENT OF PORTUGUESE FOODSTUFFS IS IMPORTED WHICH RESULTS IN A SIGNIFICANT BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DRAIN. THE EC IS LOOKING FOR WAYS TO PROVIDE PORTUGAL WITH ESSENTIAL FOODSTUFFS, LARGELY MEAT AND NONFAT DRY MILK (NFD). (REF EC BRUSSELS 737). HE NOTED THAT THE COMMUNITY WAS HAMPERED BY THE FACT THAT PORTUGAL DOES NOT QUALIFY AS AN LDC; THEREFORE, THE COMMUNITY IS LIMITED IN THE AMOUNT OF FOOD AID IT COULD PROVIDE. WITH REGARD TO LOW COST SALES, THE COMMUNITY RISKED RUNNING INTO ACCUSATIONS BY SUCH GATT MEMBERS AS AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND THAT THE EC WAS DUMPING. HE NOTED THE COMMUNITY COULD SELL AT THE WORLD MARKET PRICE BUT THAT THAT WOULD NOT HELP PORTUGAL MUCH. ANOTHER ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE TO SELL AT THE WORLD MARKET PRICE AND LOAN PORTUGAL THE MONEY TO MAKE THE PURCHASES BUT THERE DID NOT APPEAR TO BE ANY COMMUNITY MECHANISM FOR THIS TYPE OF AN ARRANGEMENT. DE KERGORLAY SAID IT WAS TOO EARLY TO SAY JUST HOW THE COMMUNITY'S FOOD PROGRAM FOR PORTUGAL WOULD BE IMPLEMENTED, BUT HE WOULD KEEP IN TOUCH WITH US AS PLANS FIRMED UP.

6. DE KERGORLAY SAID THE COMMUNITY COULD ALSO HELP BY IMPROVING COMMERCIAL ARRANGEMENTS. IN SOME AREAS SUCH AS WINE THIS WAS POLITICALLY IMPOSSIBLE BUT THERE ARE IMPORTANT AREAS NOTABLY INDUSTRY IN WHICH THE COMMUNITY COULD ACT. THE COMMUNITY COULD ALSO ASSIST BY CONTINUING TO EMPLOY PORTUGUESE WORKERS. CURRENTLY OVER ONE MILLION PORTUGUESE WORK IN THE COMMUNITY. SINCE THERE ARE NOW SOME 5.5 MILLION UNEMPLOYED IN THE NINE MEMBER STATES ONE MIGHT HAVE ANTICIPATED CERTAIN CUTBACKS IN PORTUGUESE WORKERS ON PRINCIPAL BUT THIS HAS NOT TAKEN PLACE. MOREOVER, THE COUNCIL HAS DECIDED TO INCLUDE A CHAPTER IN THE NEW EC/PORTUGUESE AGREEMENT TO INSURE THAT UNEMPLOYMENT COMPENSATION AND INSURANCE WILL APPLY TO PORTUGUESE WORKERS EVEN IF THEY MOVE FROM ONE EC COUNTRY TO ANOTHER. (I.E. AS IN THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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RECENTLY CONCLUDED MAGHREB ACCORDS.) THE COMMUNITY HAS ALSO ENCOURAGED THE PORTUGUESE TO TAKE SEVERAL STEPS TO INSURE THAT THE FLOW OF REPATRIATED EARNING CONTINUE. THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT CAN GIVE FAVORABLE TREATMENT TO THESE REMITTANCES-- THEY CAN ALSO TAKE MEASURES TO IMPROVE THEIR TOURIST SITUATION.

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7. IN THE SHORT RUN, DE KERGORLAY BELIEVES THAT THE DETERIORATION OF PORTUGAL'S BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SITUATION CAN AT LEAST BE ARRESTED AND SOME SMALL IMPROVEMENT MIGHT EVEN BE REGISTERED BUT HE DID NOT ANTICIPATE MUCH IMPROVEMENT UNTIL SOME TIME INTO 1976. FOR LATE 1976 AND BEYOND THE COMMUNITY AND OTHERS CAN DEVELOP TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TO HELP THE PORTUGUESE IMPROVE THEIR PLANNING MECHANISM AND REORGANIZE THEIR BASIC STRUCTURE TO BRING ABOUT MORE BALANCED DEVELOPMENT. DE KERGORLAY SAID THAT HE WAS HOPEFUL THAT BY THE END OF 1977 THE COMMUNITY WILL HAVE APPROVED A NEW FINANCIAL PROTOCOL WHICH WOULD TAKE OVER WHERE EMERGENCY AID LEFT OFF. HE WAS UNWILLING TO PREDICT HOW MUCH MONEY WOULD BE INVOLVED BUT HE SAID IT WOULD BE SUBSTANTIAL.

8. NOOTER SAID THAT IN GENERAL TERMS WE AGREED WITH DE KERGORLAY'S ANALYSIS. THE TREND WAS TO THE RIGHT AND DESPITE THE UNCERTAINTIES WE WERE NOT HEDGING OUR BETS BUT WERE GOING AHEAD WITH OUR PROGRAM. HE ALSO AGREED THAT THE MILITARY AND THE PARTIES HAD STILL NOT SORTED OUT THEIR RELATIONSHIP BUT THE PEOPLE THAT HE HAD SEEN

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DID NOT BELIEVE THAT THIS WOULD BE A MAJOR CONCERN. PATTERSON ADDED THAT IT WAS CLEAR THAT THE ROLE OF THE PARTIES HAD BEEN STRENGTHENED VIS--VIS THE MILITARY BUT IT APPEARED THAT THE MILITARY WAS BECOMING RESIGNED TO THE NEW RELATIONSHIP.

9. NOOTER SAID THAT HE WAS ENCOURAGED ABOUT THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEM. THE SITUATION THAT HE FOUND IN PORTUGAL HAD BEEN BETTER THAN HE HAD EXPECTED. IN THE SHORT RUN HE DOES NOT ANTICIPATE A CRISIS. LATER IN THE YEAR, HOWEVER, IMPORTS WILL PROBABLY INCREASE AND IT IS UNCLEAR WHETHER THE IMPROVED TOURISM AND FOREIGN WORKER REMITTANCES WILL BE ENOUGH OF AN OFFSET.

10. NOOTER SAID HE WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE THE EC APPROACH TO ITS TRADE NEGOTIATIONS WITH PORTUGAL. ULTIMATELY THIS COULD PROVE TO BE MORE HELPFUL TO PORTUGAL THAN AID. RYAN ADDED THAT EXTENSION OF US/GSP TO PORTUGAL COULD ALSO HELP. NOOTER WAS ALSO ENCOURAGED BY THE COMMUNITY'S POSITION ON PORTUGUESE WORKERS. HE SAID THAT IT WAS OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT CURRENTLY PORTUGUESE LAW PERMITTED FOREIGN REMITTANCES TO BE HELD IN FOREIGN EXCHANGE IN PORTUGUESE BANKS WHICH WOULD HELP THE REMITTANCE PICTURE.

11. NOOTER AND DE KERGORLAY AGREED THAT IT WAS HARD TO ANALYZE THE IMPACT THE STILL UNCOMPLETED INVESTMENT CODE WOULD HAVE. NOOTER REPORTED HE HAD BEEN ASSURED THAT MUCH OF THE OBNOXIOUS LANGUAGE HAD BEEN KNOCKED OUT OF EARLIER DRAFTS BUT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE FINAL PRODUCT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE. ACCORDING TO PATTERSON, BUSINESS MEN WERE CONCERNED ABOUT CATCH-ALL PHRASES GIVING THE GOVERNMENT BROAD AUTHORITIES INCLUDING THE RIGHT TO NATIONALIZE IN CASE OF NATIONAL INTEREST. EVEN WHEN THE CODE IS FINALIZED IT WILL BE NECESSARY TO SEE HOW IT IS INTERPRETED AND IMPLEMENTED. NOOTER SAID IT DID LOOK AS IF THE CODE WOULD PROVIDE FOR PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT TO EXPORT INDUSTRIES WHICH SHOULD HELP THE BALANCE OF PAYMENTS SITUATION.

12. ANOTHER QUESTION MARK WAS THE PORTUGUESE BUDGET. NEITHER SIDE HAD HAD TIME TO ANALYZE IT IN ANY DEPTH. PATTERSON NOTED ONE WEAKNESS APPEARS TO BE A FAILURE TO CALCULATE THE EFFECT OF THE MONEY SUPPLY ON THE BUDGET. IT IS ALSO UNCLEAR WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT HAS THE ABILITY TO SPEND AT THE BUDGETED LEVELS. LAST YEAR THERE WAS A SHORTFALL.

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13. LANERS REPORTED ON THE EUROPEAN INVESTMENT BANK'S MISSION TO PORTUGAL IN CONNECTION WITH THE COMMUNITY'S EMERGENCY AID PROGRAM. (ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY MILLION UNITS OF ACCOUNT (UA) AT NINE AND ONE HALF PERCENT, WITH SOME THIRY MILLION UA TO PROVIDE A THREE PERCENT INTEREST RATE REDUCTION.) THE BANK HAD BEEN STRUCK BY THE HIGH LEVEL OF COMPETENCE THEY FOUND ON THE PORTUGUESE SIDE WHICH EXTENDED WELL DOWN INTO THE MINISTRIES AND UP TO THE MINISTERS THEMSELVES. THE SPECIFIC PROJECTS AND FEASIBILITY STUDIES HAD BEEN PREPARED WITH A DEGREE OF SOPHISTICATION WELL BEYOND WHAT THE BANK USUALLY

FOUND AROUND THE MEDITERRANEAN. THE PORTUGUESE PROVIDED THE BANK WITH A LONG LIST OF PROSPECTS, MANY OF WHICH SEEMED PROMISING. THE TOTAL LIST WAS LARGER THAN THE AVAILABLE MONEY. THERE WERE PROJECTS IN A NUMBER OF AREAS INCLUDING ELECTRICAL POWER, TRANSPORT, IRRIGATION AND INDUSTRY. MOST LOANS WILL HAVE A 10 YEAR PAYBACK PERIOD WITH A GRACE PERIOD DURING THE DURATION OF CONSTRUCTION.

14. BOTH THE PORTUGUESE GOVERNMENT AND THE BANK ARE INTERESTED IN PROJECTS WHICH PROVIDE FOR RAPID FUND DISPERSAL. IT NOW LOOKS AS IF IT WILL BE POSSIBLE TO ANNOUNCE AGREEMENT ON SOME PROJECTS BEFORE THE APRIL 25 ELECTIONS. AS MUCH AS ONE-HALF MIGHT BE DISPERSED IN 1976 WITH THE REMAINDER IN 1977 AND A SMALL AMOUNT IN 1978 BY WHICH TIME, HOPEFULLY, A NEW FINANCIAL PROTOCOL WILL BE IN EFFECT. LANES AGREED TO KEEP THE MISSION INFORMED OF THE BANK'S PROGRESS AND TO LET US KNOW AS PROJECTS ARE APPROVED.

15. NOOTER OUTLINED THE US AID EFFORT ALONG THE LINES OF REFTEL. IN SUM HE SAID IT LOOKED AS IF WITHIN THE NEXT TWELVE MONTHS OR SO ABOUT \$200 MILLION WOULD BE OBLIGATED. MOST OF THE US ASSISTANCE WILL BE FOR HOUSING, SCHOOLS, HEALTH UNITS AND SEWAGE AND WATER SYSTEMS. NOOTER WAS ENCOURAGED BY THE FACT THAT THE US AND THE EC PROGRAMS APPEARED TO COMPLEMENT ONE ANOTHER.

16. NOOTER SAID THAT HE HAD MENTIONED TO THE PORTUGUESE THE UTILITY OF DISCUSSIONS AMONG VARIOUS GROUPS PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO PORTUGAL. THE PORTUGUESE WERE FAIRLY RECEPTIVE TO THE IDEA BUT ARE SENSITIVE ON THIS SUBJECT AND WOULD WISH TO CALL MEETINGS THEMSELVES AND KEEP THEM INFORMAL. IN ALL LIKELIHOOD IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO GET ANYTHING GOING BEFORE THE ELECTIONS BUT IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO DO SOMETHING AFTER THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS INSTALLED. NOOTER NOTED THAT SOME SORT OF A PROJECT ALONG THESE LINES COULD BE USEFUL IN THE INITIAL PHASES BUT PROBABLY LESS USEFUL AS THINGS GET UNDERWAY. DE KERGORLAY NOTED THAT EFTA MINISTERS HAD DECIDED ON \$150 BILLION PACKAGE FOR PORTUGAL BUT CURRENTLY DID NOT HAVE THE MACHINERY AVAILABLE TO IMPLEMENT SUCH A PROGRAM A MEETING OF ALL AID DONORS WOULD HELP PUT EFTA IN THE PICTURE.

17. NOOTER SAID THAT ONE WAY TO ALLEVIATE THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION IN PORTUGAL WOULD BE TO ENCOURAGE MIGRATION. HE MENTIONED THAT THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL COMMITTEE FOR EUROPEAN MIGRATION (ICEM) HAD APPROACHED THE US GOVERNMENT REQUESTING \$1 MILLION AS PART OF A \$4 MILLION PROGRAM TO RESETTLE SOME 12,000 PORTUGUESE WORKERS. WE WERE LOOKING INTO WHETHER WE WOULD BE ABLE TO ASSIST OR NOT BUT IT LOOKED AS IF PERHAPS WE COULD. DE KERGORLAY CONCURRED THAT MIGRATION WOULD BE USEFUL BUT NOTED THAT THE COMMUNITY WAS NOT AN ICEM MEMBER. WHILE THE COMMUNITY MIGHT BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING ALONG THESE LINES, IT WOULD NOT BE ON ICEM TERMS. CURRENTLY

HE SAID IT APPEARED AS IF IMMIGRATION AND MIGRATION WERE MORE OR LESS BALANCING THEMSELVES OUT.

18. DE KERGORLAY SAID THT TO DATE THE EC'S MEMBER STATES HAD NOT BEEN TERRIBLY HELPFUL. THE MAIN DONOR WAS GERMANY WHICH HAD EARMARKED SOME \$28 OR \$30 MILLION IN ITS 1975 BUDGET. HE DID NOT KNOW WHT WAS PROGRAMEMED FOR 1976. THE DUTCH WERE TALKING ABOUT \$20 MILLION, BUT IT WAS UNCLEAR IF THEY WOULD DECUT A BILATERAL DUTCH CONTRIBUTION FROM THERI CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMMUNITY'S EFFORT. IF THEY DID SO IT WOULD ESENTIALLY BE A WASH TANSACTION. HE SAID HE THOUGHT THE MEMBER STATES WERE HOLDNG BACK PARTIALLY BECAUSE IT WOULD BE HARD TO GET BILATERAL AID THROUGH PARLIAMENTS. HE SAID HE DIDN'T EXPECT ANYTHING FROM THE FRENCH WHO WERE ALREADY SUPPORTING SOME 100,000 PORTUGUESE WORKERS WHICH AMOUNTS TO NEARLY TWO PERCENT OF THE FRENCH LABOR FORCE. THE FRENCH ARE, HOWEVER, POSITIVE ABOUT THE COMMUNITY PROGRAM, HED SAID.

19. DE KERGORLAY SAID THAT FROM EVERYTHIN HE HAD SEEN IT APPEARED AS IT THE EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WERE NOT BEING VERY FORTHCOMING. IT LOOKED AS IF THE EASTERN EUROPEANS WERD DRIVING HARD BARGAINS. HE ADDMITTED TO BEING SURPRISED AT THEIR APPARENT INDIFFERENCE.

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20. BOTH SIDES AGREED TO THE UTILITY OF EXCHANING INFORMATION ON OUR AID EFFORTS. DE KERGORLAY SAID HE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO HAVE PORTUGAL AS AN AGENDA ITEM FOR THE NEXT SEMI-ANNUAL US/EC CONSULTATIONS.

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